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AGO D/A ltr 11 Jun 1980

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IN REPLY REFER TO

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (25 Oct 72) DAFD-OTT

16 November 1972

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: LTC Robert J. Corley,
Senior Advisor, Long Khan and Binh Long Province, 1 Dec 70 -
16 Jun 72

AD905627

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1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U) 2 July 1971.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of LTC Robert J. Corley, subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 525-14; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
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SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report (RCS CSFOR-74)

Completion of Tour Report

LTC Robert J. Corley

Province Senior Advisor

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: Long Khanh - 1 December 1970 to 21 May 1971

Binh Long - 21 May 1971 to 16 June 1972

DAFD-OTT
72B020
Inclosure

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SECTION I

NAME: ROBERT J. CORLEY

GRADE: LTC

SSAN: 249-36-4341

BRANCH OF SERVICE: United States Army

PROVINCE: Long Khanh and Binh Long Province

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: Long Khanh - 1 December 1970 to 21 May 1971
Binh Long - 21 May 1971 to 16 June 1972

EXPECTED REASSIGNMENT DATE: 17 June 1972

PREVIOUS TOUR(S) IN VIETNAM (DATES - INCLUSIVE): February 1968 - March 1969

ASSIGNMENT ON PREVIOUS VIETNAM TOUR(S): Chief of the Construction Review
Branch, Headquarters, USAW and Battalion Commander of the 84th Engineering
Construction Battalion

SECTION II

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1. What background did you have for your position? One previous tour in Vietnam as Chief of the Construction Review Branch, Headquarters, USAID and as Battalion Commander of the 84th Engineer Construction Battalion in Binh Dinh Province; plus other various assignments with the US Army working with foreign nationals in Germany, Korea, Greece and Taiwan.
2. What training did you have for this position? Eight months training at Foreign Service Institute at Washington, D.C. during the period February 1970 to 4 October 1970.
3. What additional training would you suggest for your position? None.
4. What should be the length of tour for your position? Eighteen months is about right.

3.

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5. Was support from Region and/or Saigon Headquarters satisfactory? If not, specify deficiencies. Always more than adequate in all areas except provision for consistent adequate telephonic communication. This problem has been long standing and the provision of clear telephonic communication with higher headquarters would facilitate all operations.

6. Were there any programs delayed because support was not forthcoming? Were there any programs that were especially successful because support was readily available? Which ones?

Not appropriate.

7. Do the reporting requirements set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 provide a means for reporting all information of present and future value? If not, what changes would you recommend?

I would recommend that all reporting requirements from this point forward be consolidated and included in the monthly province report. In the reports that cannot be included in the monthly province report, they should either be eliminated or should be attached thereto as inclosures.

8. Do the MACCORDS Management Information System Field Reporting requirements set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 adequately measure progress in pacification programs?

I feel that this reporting requirement as most other reporting requirements can be eliminated and the measurement of progress in pacification program be included in the monthly province report.

7

9. Were instructions from higher headquarters clear with no conflicting requirements? If not, what specific instances occurred where conflicting instructions were received?

Any conflicting requirements from higher headquarters were always resolved prior to response from Binh Long Province. There will always be conflicting requirements with higher headquarters when it is responsible for such a myriad of missions. Any conflicts arising were minimal and could be resolved with various staffs.

ANSWER QUESTIONS 10 - 15 BY GIVING AN ORDER OF PRIORITY.

10. The most clearly defined and directed programs are:

1. Village Self-Development

2. Land Reform

3. The Agriculture Development Bank on the Loan Program.

11. The most effective para military forces are:

1. RF

2. PF

3. National Police

12. The most successful pacification programs are:

1. Land Reform - I can not emphasize strongly enough the importance of Land Reform and its significance to the national growth of South Vietnam.

2. Education - Until the young people are educated to their responsibility and their place in the movement of South Vietnam, the country will continue to have a dearth of trained leaders.

3. Village Self-Development.

13. The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort are:

1. The programs listed above and their successful application have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort in Vietnam.

2.

3.

14. The least successful pacification programs are:

1. Chieu Hoi

2. VIS

3. Phung Hoang

15. The programs that have the least impact upon the pacification effort are:

The programs listed above have the least impact upon the pacification effort for many reasons; the most important reason is that the leadership provided by the GVN in these areas is weak. I am convinced now, as I have been in the past, that the Vietnamese Government and its people can do anything they wish to do. When they want these programs to work these programs will work.

16. The rural people (NM) (are not) aware of the pacification efforts the GVN and US are making. If not, how can they be informed?

The rural people are not always aware of the pacification effort being made by the GVN and the United States. The primary reason is that they were not informed by the VIS. When the leadership at the top insists upon information to all, then these problems will be overcome.

17. The people, as you know them, are (more) (less) committed to the GVN than when you assumed your job. Why?

The people as I know them in Binh Long Province were becoming strongly committed to the GVN and I feel that as a result of the brutal attack of the North Vietnamese Army against Binh Long Province during the period beginning in April 1972, they will be more fiercely aligned with the GVN.

18. Do you feel that the pacification plan is sufficiently detailed to provide guidance and set goals that will result in security and growth of Vietnam? (Yes)(NM) If no, what change in the plan should be made?

Yes.

19. Do you feel that the pacification plan was adequately communicated and explained to you and your counterpart? (Yes)(NM) If not, how can this be accomplished?

Yes, and I point out that the training programs conducted at Vung Tau where all province officials were given training in their particular programs was outstanding. I would strongly recommend that this practice be continued.

SECTION III

Functional Areas

On the following pages give a history of the successes and failures and background of functional areas that have transpired during your tour as province advisor. Give your comments on what changes should be made to improve each program in the future.

Recommendations for additional subjects for discussion during the debriefing interview should be included on Page 19 - "Other Areas".

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TERRITORIAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

RF/FF: Before the invasion of South Vietnam in April of 1972, the territorial security in Binh Long was the sole responsibility of the Binh Long Provincial Territorial Forces. The "B" ratings attributed to all hamlets in the province were directly attributable to the successful amalgamation of all para-military units consolidated into a workable protective force. There is, of course, a large variance from very good to very poor in the combat performance of some of the units. In 99 per cent of the cases, the leadership element makes a unit good or bad. The point I make here is with good leadership we can develop good units but until we train and educate the young people of the country to their responsibilities of leadership, this leadership will be thin.

PSDF: As a combat element they are not effective. As a psychological boost to achieve commitment of the people to the creation of a free and viable government, they are vital and they play one of the most important roles in the pacification efforts taking place in the country. As a social and political force, the PSDF have achieved great successes. This program has resulted in a commitment of the people to the GVN and provide an organization through which the GVN can originate youth activities such as athletic teams, singing and dancing groups and civic action.

9.

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PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTORATE

National Police Field Force: The NPFF are marginally effective, but I feel that with the impact of the last two months in Binh Long that this unit will be used more effectively than it has been in the past. National Police as a viable law enforcement agency tends to continue exhibiting new shortcomings. Their leadership in the mid-level is weak and in some instances susceptible to corruption. One of the major problems is creating the environment that will allow all police to remain in the hamlets, and I emphasized "hamlets" and not villages, 24 hours a day. Their position, vis-a-vis RVN, remains weak. But it is a must that, along with the PSDF, the National Police assigned a greater responsibility for hamlet and village security if the RVN plans to utilize RF and FF in the achievement of territorial security goals.

National Police Operations: See above.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE.

Village Self Development: All Village Self-Development projects are vital and I emphasized that for this program to be consummated it will require the support of the village population and it is only from this support that the program has any value. In Binh Long Province these projects, developed through village council meetings and discussions with the people, created the necessary interest on the part of the people to assure their successful completion. Having said this, I must state that in the Montagnard villages and hamlets, this program has not achieved the goals it should have.

RD Cadre: The only weakness in the RD Cadre is at the top and that is, naturally, where the weakest element hurts the most. The RD Cadre by and large are qualified and will perform when properly organized and trained; however, the greatest problem was obtaining these qualified leaders for the top positions.

Ethnic Minorities: This program and all plans involving Montagnards, and other minority groups, were only marginally successful. All successes in the Ethnic Minority Program were due mainly to the interest of the Province Chief rather than any leadership provided by the Ethnic Minority Service Chief. Unfortunately the attitude of benign neglect still prevails in Vietnamese-Montagnard relationships.

Local Government: Local Government is a slow but productive program that is beginning to show results. Efficiency is a key note of the program and it is still in the distant future; but the experience being gained by the governmental officials at hamlet and village level will create the medium through which CVN programs and directives will reach the people.

AID In Kind: AID In Kind should be discontinued as soon as possible; however, the Province Senior Adviser should be provided with funds to assist any and all programs which he and his staff designated as vital.

REFUGEE DIRECTORATE

Refugee: At the time of this writing, refugees are a first priority effort for Binh Long Province and it is vital that their health and welfare be given top consideration. It is strongly recommended that once the NVA, that destroyed the pacification effort of many years in Binh Long, are eliminated, that every effort be made to resettle the refugees from Binh Long back to the province and that refugees from other areas be included.

Social Welfare: A good program that by and large is carried forward by good leaders.

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CHIEU HOI DIRECTORATE

Chieu Hoi: The Chieu Hoi Program was not successful and the reason that it was not successful is because the Chieu Hoi Directorate and the VNS were not working in full accord. Without the cooperation of these two agencies it will not be possible to achieve a successful program.

REPORTS AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

Report Requirements: Report requirements were previously addressed in another area.

Report Feedback: This is an area tha can and should be improved upon.

PHOENIX DIRECTORATE

PHOENIX: This program is marginally effective and will remain so until such time that the Vietnamese people accept the fact that the Viet Cong work full time to eliminate GVN officials and that the GVN officials must, to succeed ultimately, eliminate the VC Infrastructure. Once Province Chiefs and all officials in all provinces accept the fact that the Viet Cong spend full time trying to eliminate them from their positions, I feel sure that the attitude will change concerning Phung hoang operations. Once the officials decide to destroy the VCI program will be successful. But not until.

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Public Health: Public Health generally is a successful program, however, in many cases in the montagnard village dispensaries are manned by Public Health personnel but often not used. Visits by Public Health officials are regularly made to outlaying hamlets but until the superstitions are overcome concerning modern medicine, Public Health will continue to be a problem area.

Education: Education to promote strong leadership in all positions of the GVN is paramount. If I were to pin point an area which should receive more attention than any other it would be the field of education. From 1954 through the present, the VCI have ruthlessly and selectively eliminated many leaders at the village and hamlet level. Leadership is thin at best and until there is a reserve of education and dedicated people this will be a continuing problem.

Public Works: Public Works in Binh Long Province, because of the presence of a dedicated and talented Public Works Chief, is a good program. Good routes of communication are the key to the successful development of under-developed countries.

Economic Development: Before the invasion of the North Vietnamese, Binh Long Province was well on its way to full economic recovery and if the province maintains its present capable leadership the economic resurgence in Binh Long will take place. The potential of the province is unlimited and the goal of self-sufficiency by 1974 would have been achieved had the RVN not attacked and may yet be achieved if total assistance is rendered to rebuild those areas destroyed by the Communists.

Land Reform: Name any program you will, give any name you desire but when land is given to a man he becomes dedicated to the further enrichment of that soil. He will work, he will build, and he will align himself with the government that makes it possible for him to have land of his own. There are sufficient lands available to effect rapid development if they are quickly and fairly distributed.

Domestic Production: Production of varied and new products in Binh Long were making quantum leaps and when the security base is again provided, I feel that the production will surely surpass production figures previously achieved.

Labor: The Labor Market in Binh Long has been virtually destroyed. Land reform can be achieved and if refugees are resettled, I feel that people working on their own land will achieve greater production and will be able to derive from their labors a more proportionate share of its riches.

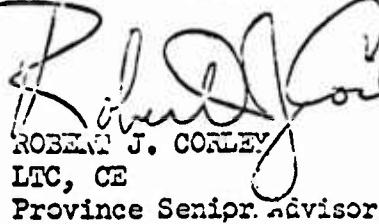
Youth Affairs: Youth Affairs, probably is one of the most successful efforts that I witnessed in my association with the Vietnamese in Binh Long Province. The personal interest displayed by the Province Chief and his District Chiefs achieved a viable youth affair program. The present leadership of the province realize that by placing particular attention in these areas they could channel the activities of young people into productive GVN activities. It was a good program and the young people were given an outlet for their energies and they enjoyed themselves.

Public Administration: Again this area is weak and again it should be emphasized that the leadership must be fully trained. Until such time as an equitable tax structure is achieved, the Government of South Vietnam will be forced to receive outside assistance to sustain itself. Thus economic development and equitable distribution of resources can be achieved only after a fair taxing program is attained.

PSYOP: Psychological operations up to the time that Binh Long was invaded, this program was partially effective; however, for the two month period when An Loc was under seige it failed miserably. I consider it one of the greatest failures in any area of which I am aware. We requested, time and time again, that Psyops be employed but we were always left with the feeling that we were discussing an entirely new concept and that no one understood what we were talking about. Psychological operations are most effective when used in conjunction with current operations and are counter productive when they are not current. Again, I state Psyops failed miserably in An Loc during the months of April and May. Somebody's knuckles should be rapped.

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OTHER AREAS

Attached at Inclosure 1 is the log which was kept by Advisory Team 47 in An Loc. There are personal items included which can be and should be eliminated if it is ever made a part of any historical document.


ROBERT J. CORLEY
LTC, CE
Province Senior Advisor

Inclosure 1 withdrawn
On file at HQ MACCORDS

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